FROM: P. O. Box 9007
Berkeley, CA 94709 USA

AIR MAIL

To:

AIRPORT MAIL FACILITY

FRANCIS PARKMAN AMERICAN HISTORIAN U.S. POSTAGE 3¢

We hold these Truths... UNITED STATES 10¢

POSTAL SERVICE CA 940 PM 17 NOV 1974 U.S.

Rec'd 11-20-74

30¢

rail travel newsletter

VOL. 4 NO. 21
FIRST ISSUE OF
NOVEMBER 1974
#95

Rec'd 11-20-74

FROM: P. O. Box 9007
Berkeley, CA 94709 USA

AIR MAIL

To:

FRANCIS PARKMAN AMERICAN HISTORIAN U.S. POSTAGE

We hold these Truths...

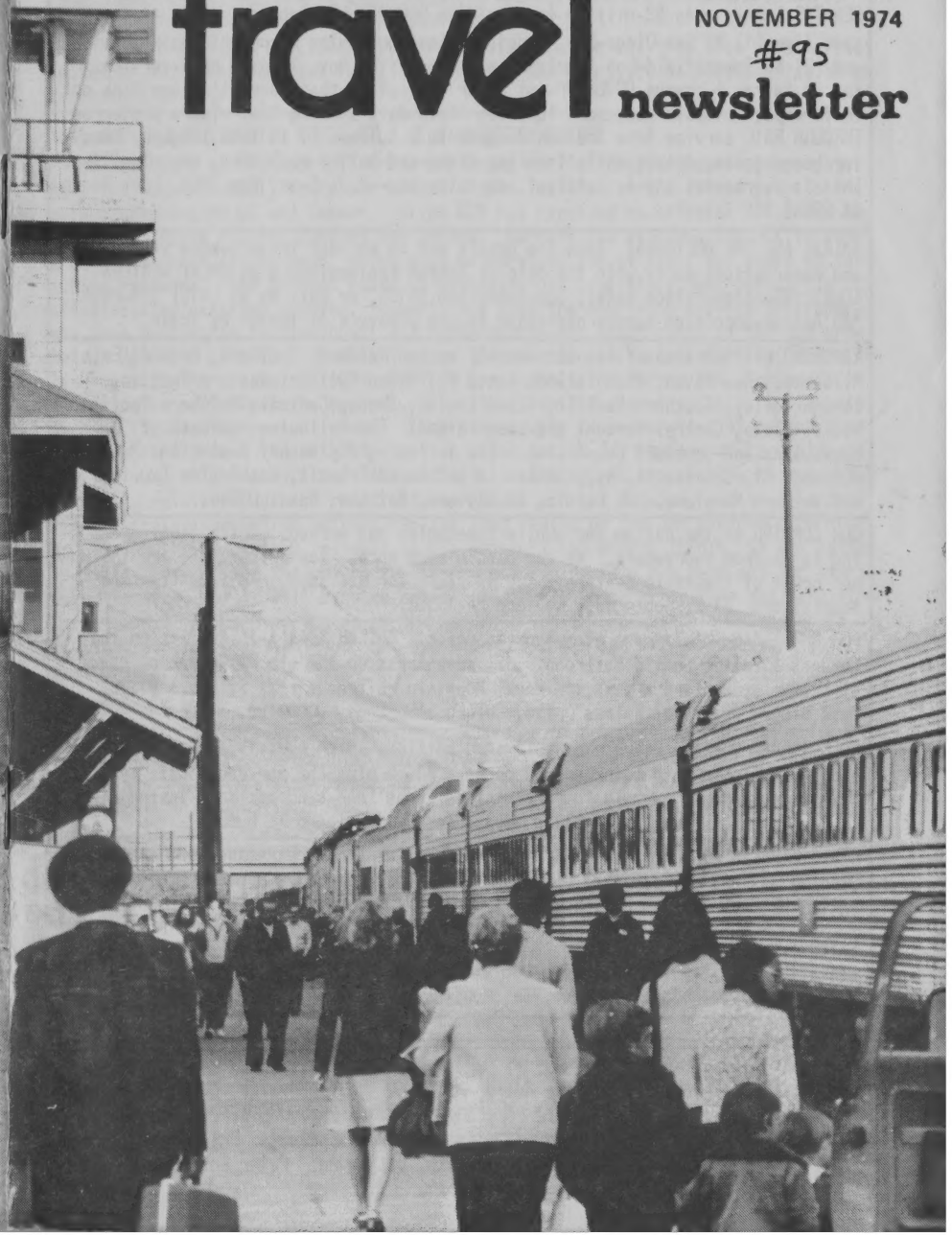
UNITED STATES 10c

U.S. POSTAL SERVICE CA 940 PM 17 NOV 1974

rail travel newsletter

30¢

VOL. 4 NO. 21
FIRST ISSUE OF
NOVEMBER 1974
#95



Express Ads

TALLAHASSEE was the reason Railpax chose the Birmingham routing of FLORIDIAN. I commend thoughtful, constructive proposed "Atlanta section" split in last RTN. Retained "Birmingham section" MUST ROUTE VIA FLORIDA STATE CAPITAL. Roger Lewis needs professional help to carry out the good intentions of Railpax.--Catalyst

SENATOR Tunney gets $8-million to subsidize BOONDOGGLE planners, while at the same time (1) NO San Diego-San Francisco time-conserving overnight train service, and (2) NO Bakersfield-Los Angeles train--nor after Nov. 10 even bus--service. And at Amtrak I charge COVER-UP--of never indicating that connecting bus link on their maps, in their ads...and ignoring State data showing that riders preferred THROUGH RAIL service from the San Joaquin to L.A. even if it took longer. Money for boondoggles, dreams while ignoring bread-and-butter realities, opportunities: This is outrageous and I, catalyst, am outraged.--R.J. Swan, Box 1866, Long Beach CA 90801.

AMTRAK AND THE HOLIDAYS! Take the hassle out of holiday travel--make your plans and reservations early with the helpful Amtrak Professionals at GREAT WESTERN TOURS, Sheraton-Palace Hotel, San Francisco 94105, or call us at (415) 398-2994. "An Amtrak-appointed agency dedicated to the pleasure of travel by train."

RAILROAD UNIFORM sleeve/vest buttons 40¢ each. Reading, Southern, Frisco, Erie, Milwaukee, New Haven, Rock Island, Santa Fe, Union Pacific, Western Pacific, Lehigh Valley, Southern Pacific, Steam Engine, Jersey Central, Northern Pacific, Nickel Plate, Central Vermont and Long Island. The following 50¢ each: Lackawanna and Seaboard Coast Line. The following 75¢ each: Boston and Maine, Rutland, St. Charles St. Ry., Staten Island Rapid Transit, Washington Terminal, and Western Maryland. J. Lajoie, 22 Stevens, Methuen, Mass. 01844.

OUR COMBING of the nation for public timetables has worked. Collections are coming to us from everywhere. We can handle even more. Top prices. We are the upper crust of timetable dealers. Try us first for $'s sake. Antique Timecard Acquisitors, 21 E. Robin Rd., Holland PA 18966.

FOR CHRISTMAS - A 28 page storybook to color. "STEAMY" is a locomotive on the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad. His adventures on the old D&RGW narrow gauge will give youngsters a feel for Rocky Mountain railroading as it was. $1.75. Dave Ulmer, Jr., 1407 Holmes Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80909.

ROCK ISLAND PLAYING CARDS. New, limited edition. High quality, attractive design. Available with black or red backs. $1.50 plus 25¢ per deck post. & hdlg. Make check or M.O. payable to "Rock Island Lines" and send to: Rock Island Lines, Public Relations Dept. RTN, 139 W. Van Buren St., Chicago IL 60605.

RTN'S EXPRESS ADS cost just 50¢ per line for line of 80 characters and spaces. Display ads are $25 per page (5x8 inches) with smaller sizes priced proportionally. Write: MESSAGE MEDIA - RTN, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

ENTER YOUR SUBSCRIPTION to this newsletter. Only $7.00 per year for 24 twice-monthly issues by first class mail. We'll be happy to bill you if you wish. Write today to: MESSAGE MEDIA - RTN, P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

Rail Travel Newsletter, Vol. 4, No. 21 (Whole No. 95), First Issue of November, 1974. Published twice monthly by Message Media, P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley, California 94709. Subscription $7.00 per year; single copy 30¢ (vol. 1-3 25¢). STAFF: James Russell, Editor; Paul Rayton, Editor-at-Large. Regional Correspondents: Peter Putnam Bretz, Malibu; Jack Ferry, Chicago; Kenneth Maylath, Baltimore; Peter Roehm, Boston. Mailing date of this issue: November 18, 1974.

ON THE COVER:

(Front cover) A photo held over from last issue--the eastbound SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR stops for servicing in Sparks, Nevada on a late October day. The two engines and first seven cars are visible. The consist pictured is: Amtrak SDP40F engines 580 & 629; Amtrak cars 1086, 1416, 9371 dome lounge, coaches 4494, 4471, 4822, 4526; GN diner "Lake McDonald," CB&Q sleeper "Silver Swan," Amtrak 2641 "Pacific Waters," UP 1403 "Pacific Beauty," Amtrak coach 7519 (to Sparks), and Great Western Tours car "Redwood" (to Sparks). Photo by Message Media.

(Rear cover) Amtrak's LONE STAR pulls into Chicago after its trip from Houston last September 14. Photo by Jack Ferry. See Alfred Ehm's article on Houston station arrangements on page 17.

NEXT AMTRAK EXPERIMENTAL ROUTE WILL BE WASHINGTON-DENVER

The Secretary of Transportation has confirmed earlier predictions in these pages, that the "experimental" route for Amtrak chosen for the current fiscal year is one between Washington DC and Denver. Altho RTN has received no official DOT press release yet, media reports confirm the choice. Current law requires the DOT to name a new route each fiscal year, which must be serviced for at least two years to test public response. The present route is obviously not completely new, but partly utilizes some existing service. Reports are that the new train service will operate from Washington to Cincinnati via Parkersburg--the exact route of the old pre-Amtrak NATIONAL LIMITED. It will then go from Cincinnati to Indianapolis, there to link up with the present NATIONAL LIMITED (presumably the former NYC Cincinnati to Indianapolis route would be needed). Then the combined operation will continue to Kansas City via the present route. From Kansas City to Denver it will run on the Santa Fe,partly on a leg without service since Amtrak-day (by way of La Junta and Pueblo.) One of the results of this addition to the Amtrak map will be to establish at last a relatively direct route between Denver and Los Angeles, and it will provide a missing connection between the two long routes of the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR and the SOUTHWEST LIMITED, as well as Rio Grande's RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR, if the latter is still running when the new route gets underway. No date has been set for start-up of service, but it will require several months to prepare stations and make other arrangements for running trains on the La Junta-Denver and Cumberland-Cincinnati portions of the route, which do not now have service. The DOT announcement was made October 29.

THE NOVEMBER VOTE - EFFECT ON TRAIN SERVICE

The results of nationwide balloting on November 5 show a Democratic landslide in Congress and in governorships, an outcome which can be supposed to be favorable to the passage of legislation supporting public transportation, altho rail travel is strictly a non-partisan issue, with support coming from both major parties. However, it could be expected that the Democratic influence will lead to greater ease in public funding of needed transportation projects.

A number of areas voted on specific transportation issues, and the outcomes were mixed. New York State approved a $250 million bond issue, details of which are given beginning on page 10. In Southern California, voters defeated a $4.3 billion bond issue to construct a rapid transit system; in Los Angeles County 54% voted against it, in Orange County 62%. Michigan voters defeated by a wide margin a transportation bond issue with appropriations for rail passenger service throughout the state. See "Urban-Suburban Transit," page 18 for further information.

THE EXCITING HOLIDAY ISSUE of this newsletter will be mailed about the end of November. Advertisers are urged to submit their copy as soon as possible, as space is extremely limited. Please try to use as little space with your ad as you can, so that we can accommodate as many advertisers as possible. Thank you.

Rail Canada

TOP PASSENGER TRAIN expert Garth Campbell, a former manager of CN passenger services, has been named Vice President - Passenger Marketing for Canadian National, effective Nov. 1, the railway has announced. Campbell was an associate of Pierre Delagrave, marketing expert from outside the rail industry who led the CN passenger revival beginning in the early 1960's. When Delagrave left CN in the late 1960's to take a marketing post at Domtar, Campbell was advanced to the top passenger post, but only as manager. CN was at that time downgrading passenger services, and eliminated the VP title for the line's top passenger man at that time.

Friends of Campbell reported in 1969 that he had become badly disillusioned with CN passenger business, and at having been eased out of the passenger department entirely shortly before becoming a top marketing executive with the Canadian Postal Service. At that time, Campbell strongly maintained that CN's passenger service would have been profitable on its main routes had newer equipment been available.

Campbell's departure from CN saw what some called a stream of unimaginative time-servers and bureaucrats taking turns as CN passenger managers, and his return to CN seems to mark a great five-year turnaround for CN. It remains to be seen whether Campbell will be able to bring back to CN the "brain trust" of passenger men who have drifted elsewhere in recent years.

Campbell joined CN in 1956 as assistant economist, and was named manager of passenger services in 1961, when the big push that doubled CN passenger revenues in 5 years was just getting underway. He helped develop the "Red-White-Blue" fare idea and the "Rapido" concept. In announcing the appointment, CN Executive VP R. R. Latimer told the press that "Campbell's appointment reflects the increasingly important role to be played by modern marketing in adjusting to the changing pattern of rail passenger service in Canada." While with the Postal Service, Campbell was responsible for developing priority-mail service and enlarging the philatelic division with what some consider a dazzling array of sales items and promotions.

"TWIN TURBO TRAIN faces" embellish new Canadian National newspaper ads and timecards. Example at right announces the "second Turbo" on the Montreal-Toronto run, leaving at 7:45 am, effective Oct. 28. The adjoining photo on page 5 is of a red-white-and-blue timecard for the Montreal-Ottawa Turbo run which got underway August 6. Newspaper ads use the motto: "Turbo - Speed. Style. Spirit."

THE CONTROVERSIAL TORONTO GO-Urban mag-lev trains, which were to have performed on a Krauss-Maffei AG test track in Munich, West Germany in late October, were laid up due to technical difficulties, forcing cancellation of a visit by Ontario officials to inspect progress of the project. The trains feature wheel-less, driverless, 20-passenger cars which float 2/3 of an inch above a concrete and steel guidebeam. A 2.5-mile test system is now under construction at the Ontario Place grounds near downtown Toronto.

PREMIER WILLIAM DAVIS of Ontario, named Transit Man of the Year by the American Transit Association, is getting into hot water at home for his pro-transit pushes. Metro Toronto Council chairman Paul Godfrey, in a front-page interview with the Toronto Star, predicted that the GO-Urban magnetic-levitation "Sky Trains" will be killed by opponents of high-rise construction needed along the route to make GO-Urban go. In another development, Davis has urged inauguration of a GO-Transit rail commuter train to his home riding of Streetsville, using a CP Rail route. Davis's announcement was released only within the riding, as he later explained "because it was felt it would only be of interest to the Premier's home constituents."

THE PRESS RELEASES coming from Transport Canada (Ministry of Transport) these days are totally uninformative about the big rail travel question--the future of passenger train travel in Canada, which is being decided in smoke-filled rooms and behind closed doors. Last issue the still vaguely formulated plans for elimination of long distance passenger trains were presented. Further details are now available.

In addition to high speed trains from city to city, coast to coast--day trains without sleeping accommodations, long distance passengers spending each night in a hotel before resuming their piecemeal day journey--there would be slower "special holiday type cruise trains" that would also stop in major cities where passengers would put up overnight in railway hotels. Canadian National and CP Rail would pool their resources in a joint passenger travel arrangement. The Montreal-Maritimes route would be served by a fast all-day train. Track improvement would be made on major routes.

The above points and those discussed in our last issue come primarily from a master plan devised by CN and presented to Transport Minister Jean Marchand. The Minister reportedly also contacted CP Rail, and has asked both railways to submit a combined proposal that would utilize the facilities of both for greater "efficiency." Canadian National hinted a few days ago, according to the Toronto Globe and Mail, that it would make public details of its master plan within a "few weeks."

All indications are that the federal government in Ottawa is going along with the notion of destroying traditional long-distance train travel in order to concentrate on less expensive fast city-to-city daytime runs. Such changes are many months away, however, industry and government spokesmen indicated, since an integrated plan acceptable to both would require that much time to arrange. Meanwhile, it is said that the Transport Minister is keeping the national passenger corporation idea on a back burner to be implemented only if the railways do not successfully join in a revised and improved passenger transport plan.

THE PERILS OF Princess Marguerite (continued): Northwest maritime figure Ron Mullins, a native of England, reported early this month that plans were progressing for a newly organized corporation to purchase the Princess Marguerite steamer from CP Rail and ready her for resumed operations on the Seattle-Victoria run. Mullins said that most of his financial backing was coming from British Columbia, as leaders in Seattle have not yet fully recognized the role that the ship has played in the Seattle economy. Thus far, negotiations with CP have delayed an announced removal of some of the ship's auxiliary equipment for placement in sister ship Princess Patricia, which is being retained by CP for the Alaska summer cruise business.

In proposing changes that are reminiscent of Auto-Train in the States, Mullins indicated installation of a discotheque, a nursery for small children, and a revamp in the dining facilities. He said the ship has at least 15 years of life remaining. He stated that his group would be free to apply for a Canadian subsidy if the ship is registered in Canada, and hoped an announcement could be made by the end of November.

FORMER TRANSPORT MINISTER J. W. "Honest Jack" Pickersgill, who piloted CTC legislation thru parliament and then resigned to become first CTC president in 1967, made a swinging attack on current transport thought in Canada at a meeting of the Air Transport Association in Vancouver. Pickersgill, a foe of passenger trains, said transport investment must be made according to "effective demand" lest the taxpayer "get it in the neck."

A TENTATIVE AGREEMENT between union members and the two major railways was announced early this month. Negotiations had been underway since mid-September and were intensified when 4000 Montreal employees left work, forcing CN to cancel all passenger service out of that city.

A WINTER ENERGY SHORTAGE IS APPROACHING

As October moved into November, talk of conserving energy, and especially oil and petroleum products has increased in intensity in national circles. Henry Kissinger unveiled a plan as we go to press for the Western nations to reduce oil consumption by a massive 10%. The Wall Street Journal summarizes the administration's position on energy conservation as adrift, unfocussed upon a clear course of action. Rogers Morton, Secretary of the Interior, spoke out this month in favor of a massive gasoline tax boost to cut consumption, but President Ford promptly replied that he does not favor this means. Ford does not favor gasoline rationing either, and the Wall Street Journal reports that his advisors are studying many means, ranging from a "horsepower tax" to gasless Sundays (Illinois gas stations have just agreed to remain closed on Sundays this winter). President Ford said on Nov. 14 that the government will have to impose some limitation if voluntary cutting back doesn't do the trick. A decision is expected to be made by early 1975 on the imposition of mandatory energy-saving measures. President Ford has appealed for compliance with the national 55mph highway speed limit, but the New York Times reports that about 70% of vehicles exceed it. Transportation Secretary Brinegar is very concerned about the problem (see QUOTES, p. 9). A Rand Corporation study has found that a gas tax rise of 45¢ per gallon, bringing the cost to about $1 a gallon, would cut gasoline use by 40%. The Federal Energy Administration released a long-expected "blueprint" in nid-November for action on the energy problem, but it is expected to be thoroughly debated and not adopted in toto.

A Washington conference on food costs at the end of October emphasized that transportation costs are a major factor in inflationary food prices, and criticized the federal government and ICC regulations for failing to control this factor.

The month of August, for which the latest figures are available, showed motorists continuing to use less gasoline than in 1973, tho usage was still equal to the 1972 level.

What all this means to travelers is that the coming months are very uncertain ones in terms of fuel availability, and that Amtrak had better be prepared for an onslaught of riders that could match last year's. As of now, winter reservations are fairly slow, probably reflecting the public's uncertainty over travel conditions coming up. Now is a good time to make reservations for winter, while room is available, even at the 10% higher fares as of Nov. 15. Meteorologists are predicting a cold, hard winter for the U.S., and travel systems will probably be stressed to their limits. Airlines have received approval of a 4% fare increase.

AMTRAK'S SYSTEMWIDE TIMETABLE IS PUBLISHED

The Amtrak "All-America Schedules" form expected Oct. 27 arrived at the end of the first week of November, bearing the date Nov. 15. The color scheme is blue-on-white this time, and the form had a printing of 104,500. The 60-page timetable lists new schedules described here last issue. A cover announcement describes Amtrak's "Roamin' Holidays" plan for Florida travelers, by which a motorhome is available at special rates along with the train fare to Orlando, and a free first night at Outdoor Resorts of America in Orlando.

RAIL MERGER IS APPROVED

The ICC has approved an 11-year-old case allowing the merger of the Rock Island and Union Pacific railroads, but handing out parts of the Rock to Rio Grande, Southern Pacific, Santa Fe and Missouri-Kansas-Texas. The announcement came shortly after word that Federal Railroad Administrator John W. Ingram was appointed head of Rock Island (see last issue). In reply to a report in our last issue, a Rock Island spokesman told RTN that the Chicago Daily News report about passenger train profitability was incorrect, and that the road's two trains are losing over $2 million yearly out-of-pocket, tho some of the loss is reimbursed by the state of Illinois. Governor Shapp of Pennsylvania has called for a congressional investigation of the relationship between John Ingram and the CRI&P-UP merger plans.

SOUTHERN PACIFIC IN HOT WATER

Southern Pacific in August asked the California Public Utilities Commission for a 111% increase in commuter fares for its San Francisco peninsula runs. Hearings on the matter began in October, and SP testified that it had not studied the impact of such an increase on its customers. But the San Francisco Examiner learned otherwise and the following story began to emerge in the press:

SP had indeed commissioned such a study, from New York transportation consultant R. L. Banks. Learning of this, state assemblyman Louis Papan of Daly City called new hearings. Papan then subpoenaed SP president B. F. Biaggini. This move inspired the SP to agree to recall a key witness from a Hawaiian vacation which had coincided with the issuance of a subpoena in his name. The subpoena for Biaggini was rescinded and the hearings re-opened. SP argued to keep the Banks report "privileged information", but Papan's influence got the Banks papers released to the committee on Oct. 31. Figures in the report seemed to confirm Papan's belief that the 111% increase figure was actually an attempt to end the commuter service entirely. The report said that a 60% fare increase would not significantly reduce ridership, but that any higher rise would. Papan's committee will hire an expert to interpret the entire report, and hearings will resume in December.

Meanwhile, SP requested an immediate 25-30% increase without public hearing, pending the outcome of the hearings on its 111% request. Papan threatened an inquiry into the state PUC in answer to charges that some of the commission's members were actually chosen by lobbyists, including the SP. Papan is also said to be developing legislation for standardizing the SP's accounting system in order to make it easier to inspect.

NEW YORK TRACK GAP

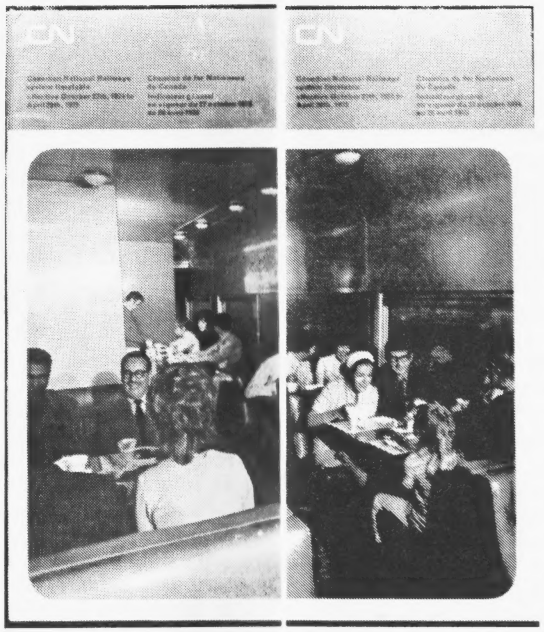
Amtrak is going ahead with plans to re-establish passenger service from Boston to Chicago thru Albany, NY even tho some track on the route is missing. In 1973 the ICC and Amtrak gave Penn Central permission to remove 12 miles of "unnecessary" track just south of the Albany-Rensselaer station. The state brought suit in Federal court to keep the track, but in spite of an informal agreement to leave the tracks until the case was settled, the rails were removed in June, 1973. The case was heard in August of that year, and the decision is still pending. Amtrak's solution to the debacle is to use a complicated backing procedure off the Castleton Bridge at the Hudson River near the Albany-Rensselaer station. The procedure will add about 10 miles and 45 minutes to the trip.

AUTO-TRAIN CORPORATION TO CARRY TRUCKS

A joint announcement made on Oct. 29 by Auto-Train Corp., SCL, L&N, and RF&P railroads revealed that an agreement in principle had been reached to establish a new "truck-train" service between the Northeast and Florida and serving the Midwest and the South between Louisville, KY and Florida. Similar in concept to the current service offered by Auto-Train which carries passengers and their autos in the same train, the new service will carry trucks and their drivers aboard the same train. Said Engene Garfield, President of Auto-Train: "The "truck-train" will enable drivers and their trucks to travel aboard the same train, arriving at their destinations rested and relaxed without the effort and expense of highway driving. The drivers will be provided en route with sleeping compartments and meals. Our new service will enable truckers to transport commodities between the Northeast and Florida as well as the Midwest and Florida, saving wear and tear on their trucks and tires, and conserving valuable fuel. The fare will be such that it will prove economically beneficial for truckers to utilize this service." The operation and fares will require ICC approval. No date for the new service has been set yet.

AMTRAK HAS TERMINATED its Passenger Service Representative and on-board Service Director program in a move said to be partly economic.

A LOOK AT THE NEW CANADIAN TIMETABLES



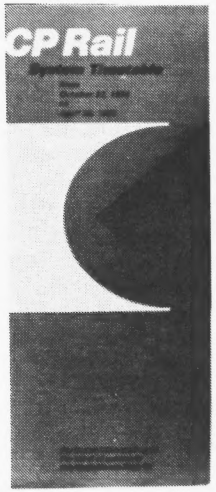
The fall and winter system timetables for Canadian National and Canadian Pacific are just out, dated October 27 to April 26, the period of Standard Time in Canada and the U.S.

CP Rail's new timetable is distinguishable from its predecessor almost only by its colour--red background for winter season versus a white background for spring and summer. It is a spartan effort, twelve pages including covers. It is devoid of any visual enticements to rail travel. The little unused space in the form is left blank, not filled in with attractive artwork extolling the virtues of train travel.

Train service is almost totally unchanged except for the expected seasonal adjustments. Trains 417-418, Sudbury to White River, revert to tri-weekly from six times a week frequency. Train 42, the ATLANTIC LIMITED (tho the name no longer appears) is back on its fall and winter schedule which re-establishes the connection with the CANADIAN at Montreal West. Strangely enough, Nos. 41-42 are the only non-RDC trains in either railway's timetable which rate an equipment listing. Neither the CANADIAN nor any of CN's trains rates an equipment listing even as brief a one as appears for 41-42, "Selection of sleeping car accommodation. Coaches (meal service)."

This is either an oversight or a deliberate attempt by CP Rail to discourage what little service remains on the Havelock-Peterboro-Toronto run; but the new timetable does not list special times for holiday service on this run. A service identical to Sunday service (an evening trip in each direction) used to be provided on holidays in lieu of the usual morning in from Havelock to Toronto and evening out from Toronto to Havelock. This would give holiday travelers a full day in any of the communities enroute, but there is no indication whether this will continue to be the case.

The timing of trains 321-376-376 Toronto-Hamilton-Welland-Buffalo has been advanced one hour. Departure from Toronto is now 8:40am instead of 9:40. There is no indication of whether Amtrak has changed the times of its connecting service in Buffalo--the timetable says only "Connecting service to and from New York" at the base of Table 12. In fact, Amtrak has not changed its schedule, and the EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS leaves Buffalo at 1:15pm. Could the extra hour required by travelers in Buffalo be a part of a CP plan to make this service less attractive?



Speeds, or lack of them, on all CP trains remain constant. There are neither any speedups or slow-downs.

Thus, for CP Rail there is neither cause for cheer nor alarm. This is definitely a stand-pat timetable. Readers pronounce it unattractive from almost any perspective, and, one cannot help feel, it is indicative of CP Rail's attitude toward the passenger. Indeed, perhaps the most interesting feature is found in the schedule of connecting Algoma Central, Table 5. The AC has reverted from daily service as expected to tri-weekly. However, in an interesting departure, this service will operate northbound from Sault. Ste. Marie on Friday, Saturday and Sunday and southbound from Hearst on Saturday, Sunday and Monday. This makes possible a weekend round trip in spectacular winter scenery.

Canadian National's fall-winter timetable is becoming more impressive--increased to 28 pages from summer's 24, and printed on a heavier stock. Distances are given in both miles and kilometers, as Canada begins the switch to the metric system over the next few years.

During the Christmas - New Year peak period, Prince Rupert-Jasper tri-weekly trains 9-10 will be extended to operate seven trips each way between Jasper and Saskatoon. Eastbound arrivals in Saskatoon are 8pm, westbound departures 9:55am.

In the busy Toronto-Windsor-Sarnia corridor, modest adjustments have resulted in running times being shortened or lengthened approximately 5 minutes on some trips. Most Toronto-Niagara Falls RDC runs are 5 minutes faster than in summer.

SUPER CONTINENTAL runs, lengthened some 8 hours in the past 8 years, remain unchanged. Prince Albert-Saskatoon RDC runs are shifted by one hour to more reasonable times, due to the end of Daylight Saving Time.

A full page in the timetable lists Amtrak-CN connections, including the long layover between the new BLUE WATER runs at Port Huron, Michigan, and CN service from Sarnia, Ontario, two miles east. Westbound layover is from 10:40pm to 5:15am. The eastbound layover is 12:25am to 7:50am. A similar schedule, showing the more convenient connections at Detroit, is also included.

The timetables of the two railways are a fascinating study in contrasts, and seem to reflect clearly their two different approaches to passenger railroading.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"Without question there is a serious and long-term energy shortage facing America. We must stop ignoring it, stop hoping that it will go away, and get on with solving it. This situation--this ticking time bomb--is potentially the most serious threat to our way of life since Pearl Harbor. ...the 1973 Middle East War and its aftermath awakened the Nation to our vulnerability. But after the oil embargo, a few weeks of gasoline lines, and some voluntary energy conservation, we seem now to be settling back into our old energy spendthrift ways. To put it bluntly, I fear that the National sense of urgency to solve our energy problem is gone, or at least going."

--Transportation Secretary Claude Brinegar in speech to Highway Users Federation, Chicago, October 30

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"PONCE DE LEON, Fla. (AP) - Ten cars of an L&M Railroad train loaded with chemicals derailed and caught fire near this tiny Holmes County town yesterday, sending dangerous fumes across two major highways."

--Oakland (CA) Tribune, November 7

(Fumes carrying that L&M flavor.)

"BREEZY, ANALYTICAL"*

That's one way of describing Rail Travel Newsletter, the twice-monthly publication that brings you the important and entertaining passenger train news all in a nutshell, delivered to your mailbox by first class mail. $7 per year. Write: MESSAGE MEDIA - RTN, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

*Railroad Magazine

New York: FIRST IN RAIL TRAVEL

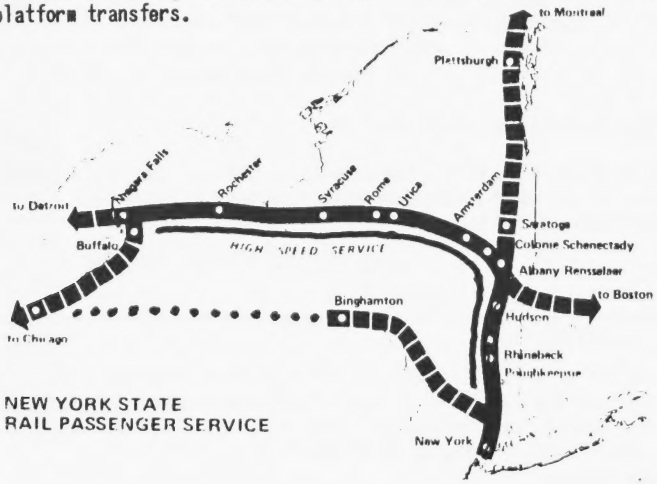
New York State voters on November 5 approved a $250 million rail bond measure designed to augment the state's ambitious rail improvement plans set in motion earlier this year by the state legislature's appropriation of $30 million. The combination of these funds is expected to generate federal support which should give New York roughly $800 million for rail projects in the next five years. Indications are that New York's new governor, Hugh L. Carey, will support implementation of the measure which he supported, altho it is possible that he may rearrange priorities. The existing program was formulated under the administration of the present Republican governor Malcolm Wilson.

Chief among the plans are improvement of intercity service and upgrading of commuter services. Five high speed passenger trains, probably French Turbos, would make the New York-Albany run at an average speed of 85mph including stops. Trains would leave Grand Central Station every 90 minutes during daylight hours. This service could begin as soon as cars are available. Turbos can be delivered in 24 months from date of order. Mr. Schuler, State Transportation Commissioner, predicts start of the service for 1976 or 1977. More optimistically, some state officials hope that Amtrak, which will actually be running the trains, might let New York State make use of one or two Turbos that the rail corporation has already on order. When current track improvements are completed and federal funds are available, the initial high-speed New York-Albany service would be extended thru to Buffalo.

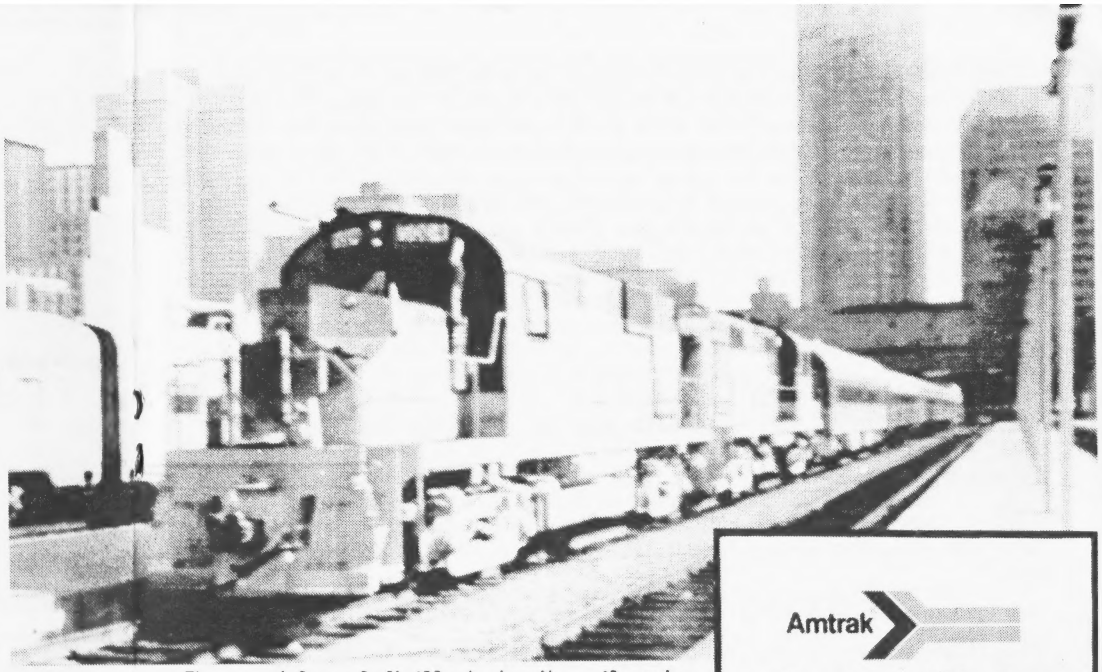
The budget for the plan calls for purchase of "off-the-shelf" items beginning in 1975. These would include high speed trains, welded rail and commuter rolling stock.

Projected commuter service improvements include renovation of rolling stock, renovation of rail line, repair of bridges, rehabilitation of stations and improvement of their parking facilities. Most of these projects are planned to begin next year.

A major change in thru state travel will be effected if the state can win Mayor Beame's approval for construction of a short tunnel from a Penn Central freight line to Penn Station. This would permit upstate trains to go directly into Penn Station rather than terminate at Grand Central as they now must. Thru state service to Washington and beyond would thus be possible, as would across-the-platform transfers.

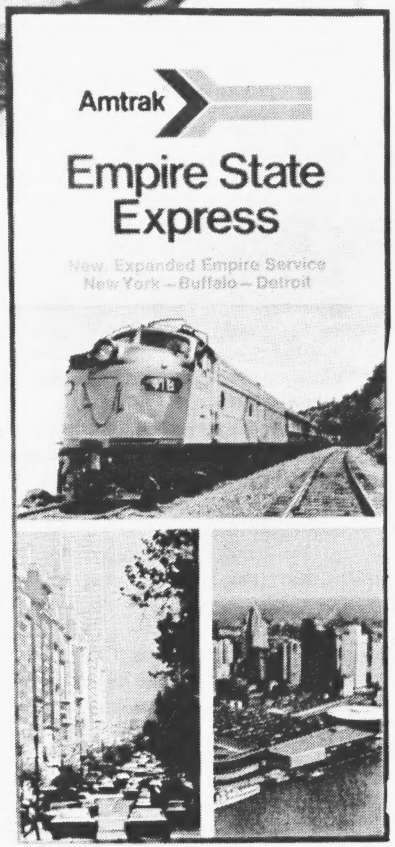


NEW YORK STATE
RAIL PASSENGER SERVICE



The map at lower left illustrates the rail routes covered by the state's Rail Program. They include New York-Montreal, served by the ADIRONDACK which began operation on August 6 (see RTN, Second August issue); Boston-Chicago, to be served by Amtrak's coming experimental operation via Cleveland; service to Niagara Falls and Detroit, by the EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS, which operation began October 31; and service between New York and the Southern Tier of the state via Binghamton thru Delaware, Sullivan, Orange and Rockland counties, expected to commence before the year is out. The state said that acquisition of the line between Remsen and Lake Placid in the Adirondacks is underway to preserve the rail rights-of-way.

The ADIRONDACK has been applauded as one of America's most photogenic trains, with its Alco PA engines, blue and silver D&H cars and Canadian Pacific dome observation. And alternate consists, as in the photo above, feature D&H Alco freight engines. The scene in this photo by Richard Palmer is Windsor Station in Montreal last August 11, and engine 5004 is on the point.



For the EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS service extension newly inaugurated, Amtrak published a full-color brochure (photo at right) with the ubiquitous modified-COAST-STARLIGHT consist pictured on the cover along with scenes of New York and Detroit. An 8-page timecard for this and Empire Service trains has just appeared, dated Oct. 31, tho the train failed to make it into Amtrak's Nov. 15 systemwide timetables just released. See last issue for train schedule. The one-way coach fare between New York and Detroit is $37.50 ($31.50 N.Y.-Toronto using TH&B connection).

A great deal of the credit for the passage of the rail bond issue goes to the League of Women Voters, environmental groups and others who supported this transportation measure. Transportation bills in 1971 and 1973 failed; these included highway expenditures, and environmental groups provided some of the major organized opposition to them.

Among supporters of the present issue was the Delaware and Hudson Railway, who distributed literature explaining the rail plan to passengers on the ADIRONDACK. The New York Times on election eve published a detailed article which began by pointing out the low per capita cost of the proposed indebtedness--62¢ annually. Among the gains to come out of the plan, according to the New York State Dept. of Transportation, would be a retention by the state of taxes amounting to over twice the expenditures spread over a 30-year period--taxes that would be lost from industries forced to relocate if branch lines were abandoned. The DOT reported that 34% of the state's 5,595 miles of track was excess, and might be abandoned. This bill, known officially as the Rail Preservation Bond Act, is to help save such branch lines, among its other aims. New York City itself is to be directly affected by 19 projects under the Act, ranging from installation of security fencing along right-of-way to initiation of high-speed train service to Buffalo.

In other New York news, the head of MTA said on Nov. 9 that plans are going ahead for a rail connection between Penn Station and John F. Kennedy International Airport.

Empire State Express

New York's most recent new passenger train service, the extended EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS, got underway Oct. 31 after Oct. 30 press runs. Prior to that date the train of that name--an old New York Central name--ran in the New York-Buffalo Empire Service. The new extension carries it on to Detroit via Welland, St. Thomas and Windsor, all in Canada (the Canadian stops will be made a little later after international negotiations are completed; as of now the train is bonded and cannot take on Canadian passengers). The state of New York is calling the train the NIAGARA RAINBOW, alluding to the fact that it will run to Niagara Falls after freight-only track is repaired. A bus connection will bring passengers into Niagara Falls pending completion of track work. After that the train will run directly from Buffalo to Niagara Falls. Now it crosses the Niagara River out of Buffalo and enters Canada at Fort Erie.

For the VIP run of the train on Oct. 30, two sets of equipment left each end of the route and riders changed trains--and direction of travel--upon reaching Buffalo. The first eastbound VIP train, reports The Fast Mail, carried a baggage car, three 62-seat coaches, and an ex-UP diner-counter-lounge. The westbound train carried one extra coach. The track between Detroit and Buffalo is reportedly in good condition, and the train averaged about 70mph, with bursts up to 80.

The first regular runs, on Oct. 31, saw the following consists: eastbound: PC E8 unit 276, Amtrak unit 263; Amtrak cars 1063, 6400, 6414, 6408, 8341, 6418, 6413; westbound: PC E8 273 & 267; cars NYC 9120 baggage, Amtrak 8342, NYC 3607, Amtrak 6417. Train numbers have been changed to 63 (westbound) & 64, from 71 & 78. The westbound train carries coaches for the ADIRONDACK as far as Albany, while they are conveyed back to New York in the consist of the DEWITT CLINTON, train 76.

It is said that arrangements are being made to lease three Canadian Pacific diners and coaches for the train, which would allow full meal service on the run. The new train is running under section 403-B of the Amtrak Act, with Amtrak and the states of New York and Michigan each paying 1/3 of any deficit. This is the first train to be jointly funded by two states under 403-B. The 676-mile run is being made on a schedule 35 minutes longer than that of the service discontinued on the route when Amtrak took over in 1971. This will presumably be improved when track repairs are completed.

THE IDEAL MODE BY MAE GILBERT REESE

Memories of happy times on trains of the early part of the century are responsible for my Amtrak travel this past summer. I was pleased to find that the old fascination still exerts its spell.

From Los Angeles to Vancouver, B.C. I lolled about in a private roomette. No longer are there Pullmans with upper and lower berths. I had loved the upper berth in the past because I felt close to and moving with the stars. I savoured the same delicious meals served by the same skilled waiters (what a balancing act they do with their trays). The rhythm of the rails had the same soporific effect it had fifty years ago. There are some changes -- the long mystical whistle that called to me with an urgent come hither as I lay on my adolescent bed is changed It is now a mellowed horn. In the dining car the silver coffee pots and the finger bowls are no more. But the napery is crisp and clean with the red and blue colors of Amtrak in the decor. The food is of the same excellent standard I remembered. The diesel engine pulls nearly twenty cars with the least amount of pollution. It was not always thus -- I remember coal burning engines that put coal soot on the window sills and cinders in the eye. But the train was always that something special that not only was to lead to adventure but was an adventure in itself.

My experiences with trains began very early in my life. In the small Dakota town where I was born (population 500) there was not the fine piano teacher that my father wanted his children to have. So arrangements were made for my older brother and myself to go to a neighboring town some fifteen miles away in the caboose of a freight car and come home in the afternoon on the passenger train. Each Saturday morning brother age ten and I age eight, music bags in hand, boarded the caboose and rode with dignity and aplomb to our piano lesson. We had our midday meal at the local hotel, and then rode jauntily home in the passenger train. All went well until Brother began to develop train sickness. Recent confessions have verified my parent's diagnosis, which was that he hadn't prepared his lesson and was fearful of the stern Miss Langdon.

However, my father's zeal for his children to have a musical education was not to be so easily daunted. He was a small town banker in the midst of a farming country. Saturday was his most important day in the bank, but he gave up his Saturday mornings to put the two of us in his Model T, cover us with buffalo robes in the winter, and chaffeur us to our lessons. In the year 1910 only hardy men drove cars; no woman dared to try the tempermental machines of that day. Sometimes the water in the radiator froze in passage and Dad would have to trek to the nearest farmhouse and come out with a steaming teakettle. The lights were acetyline and had to be pumped and coaxed to perform. The tires resembled the bicycle tires of today. All in all, I much preferred the train rides.

And now in this technological age we each ride in lonely splendor in our luxurious cars. We ride on ribbons of smooth asphalt with dull, monotonous scenery, mostly signboards punctuated by the occasional "No Vacancy" in neon. Or, to save a few minutes or tyrannical time, we sit like robots in a plane, seeing nothing.

The trains which have so much to offer us lead a precarious existence. But for those of us who rate them highly, who would rather watch from their large windows the beauties of our continent than be reduced to the status of a watcher of gas stations and road signs, the trains will always be the ideal mode of transportation.

BN OFFICES WILL be moving from the Minneapolis Amtrak station sometime in December, according to present plans, after which the second and third floors will be sealed. Amtrak is planning to keep the station open 24 hours per day thereafter, doing away with the 11pm-6am closures now in effect. Thus far there has been no word on Amtrak's previously announced plan to erect a new Twin Cities depot in the "midway" area halfway between downtown Minneapolis and downtown St. Paul..... IN EARLY NOVEMBER it was still expected that Amtrak's new Minneapolis-Duluth service would begin sometime in D3cember. The three BN coaches reportedly selected for the service from among the many cars still at St. Paul Union Depot had not been moved from St. Paul as this was being written..... THE WHITE PASS and Yukon Railway, a conglomerate featuring ships and trucks in addition to its narrow gauge rail line, will sport a new company insignia soon. White Pass president Richard Hubber-Richards, in announcing the new design, said that the company has been "sedate," but "that's going to change".....

Bay Area Electric Railroad Association
INCORPORATED

If the globe-glossing Ernest M. Frimbo had done no more than cover the 2,334,000 miles that have made him the champion of rail travel known around the world by readers of *The New Yorker*, he would be by now knight enough. But his is not linear triumph alone: the world's foremost denizen of the dining-cars is equally accomplished as lexicographer, gourmet, jazz fan, sports writer and man-about-Contessas across continents and years. His adventures—here gathered for the first time in book form, and including dozens of accounts never before shared with readers of periodicals—which have for a long time entranced and entrained so many, now make possible the ultimate armchair journey: on the Trans-Siberian railway, across Poland armed with one of four extant timetables, to the Casbah of Tangiers, to the Harlem of Hazel Scott, to the dormitories of the New York Central conductors, to the water towers of Minden, Nevada. All this and more in the company of one of the most unreservedly civilized, urbane, and compulsive travelers-in-class ever to make the best of living in the wrong century.

GROSSMAN PUBLISHERS

ALL ABOARD WITH E. M. FRIMBO, WORLD'S GREATEST RAILROAD BUFF is the November Book Store Manager's Selection of the Month. It is priced at $8.95 and is available from the California Railway Museum Book Store, Star Route 283, Box 150, Suisun City, CA 94585. California residents should add 6% tax. Telephone: weekdays 415-673-6547; weekends 707-374-2978.

Besides operating the California Railway Museum on State Highway 12 midway between Fairfield and Rio Vista, California, the Bay Area Electric Railroad Association sponsors rail tours and excursions to various places of scenic interest in the West.

We are operating an AMTRAK special train from Oakland to Chico and return SUNDAY, APRIL 20, 1975. Mark your calendar. Write us at the above address and we'll place your name on our mailing list at no charge. Drop by our Book Store and do some Christmas browsing.

mixed train of thoughts

WASHINGTON STAR-NEWS, prime Amtrak muckraker, reported on Oct. 25 that Amtrak had spent about $1.5 million on its now-postponed auto ferry service that would have competed with Auto-Train, despite warnings from experts that the project wouldn't work. Amtrak spent a half million dollars on acquiring and modifying auto rack cars that now sit idle, the newspaper article related..... MEANWHILE, AUTO-TRAIN announced Nov. 11 that the company has tested one of its new 3-level auto carriers and found it successful..... NORFOLK TO CINCINNATI passenger trains will get running by next March, Amtrak has announced, and the train will "synchronize" with the JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY to provide thru service to and from Chicago. It will leave Norfolk westbound in early afternoon and arrive Cincinnati around 7am; eastbound it will leave Cincy in late evening and reach Norfolk in mid- to late afternoon.....

* * *

AMTRAK ANNOUNCED THAT ridership in August was up 8% over August 1973. On-time performance was 77.8% systemwide, compared with 76.1% in July. Biggest ridership increase was on the BROADWAY LIMITED, 67%, while the Empire Service gained 54% and the MONTREALER 27%..... A PASSENGER SURVEY made on 7 widely-varied long distance trains July 29-Aug. 4 by Market Facts, Inc., showed that most passengers traveled by coach (74%) with their family (61%) and on vacation (37%). 73% had used the diner, and 76% of them found the food good or excellent, and 77% called the service and waiters good or excellent. 80% used the lounge and most rated the snack quality highly..... THE PANAMA LIMITED has had some problems: on Oct. 31 a freight derailment at Henning, TN blocked the ICG main line, and trains 58-59 were detoured from Memphis over L&N to Milan, TN, and thence the old IC CITY OF MIAMI line to Fulton. Tracks were restored next afternoon. The evening of Nov. 11, 10 minutes after the southbound train had left Chicago's Union Station, a telephone caller told a station official that bombs were planted in the cab, baggage car and two coaches. The train was evacuated and a search made while 5 ICG commuter trains were also held up. A suitcase was taken off for investigation but proved to contain only clothing. Ten passengers elected not to continue their journey aboard the train..... BUSES WERE SUBSTITUTED for SAN DIEGANS 770 & 773 and for the L.A.-Fullerton portion of 772-771's runs on Nov. 1 because of a freight derailment..... THE SOUTHBOUND SHAWNEE had a light and heat failure on Nov. 1, and the northbound train was filled in by a bus..... THE WILDCAT STRIKE by CN employees in Montreal on Nov. 6 resulted in passengers for Amtrak's MONTREALER being bused from Montreal to St. Albans, VT where they boarded their southbound train..... A NARROW GAUGE steam railroad, the West Side & Cherry Valley Railroad in California's gold rush country is for sale. To buy it, contact Box 443A, Wall St. Journal, 1701 Page Mill Rd., Palo Alto CA 94304..... AMTRAK HAS TOLD the ICC, investigating railroad track maintenance, that the corporation will be charged millions of dollars for deferred maintenance because of improper railroad accounting procedures. It asked for legislation to correct the underlying problem..... RAILROAD RETIREMENT FUND is being overhauled by a bill voted into law over President Ford's veto last month, the first Ford veto to be overridden..... A VICE CHAIRMAN of Amtrak has been elected: Donald P. Jacobs, professor of finance at Northwestern University. He acts as board chairman in Roger Lewis's absence.... AMTRAK WILL RUN special train direct to the Army-Navy game on Nov. 30. The round trip fare from New York is $16..... THE ONLY RDC-2 now in service on Amtrak's New Haven-Springfield line is refurbished #35, recently arrived. Former ROGER WILLIAMS cab unit #27 has received an Amtrak paint job on its nose, in the E unit style said to be highly reminiscent of the original New Haven color scheme the unit wore..... CHICAGO'S UNION STATION is to get $1.5 million in improvements by next April, including a 314-seat passenger lounge, and a 34-seat refreshment lounge, Amtrak announced on Nov. 11. A new baggage handling area will also be installed..... AMTRAK'S TURBOLINER #302 northbd on Nov. 9 broke down near Alton, IL and was towed into Chicago by IC Geep 9512, arriving there 3:37pm..... THE GENERAL MILLS board of Directors met on a special train Minneapolis-Seattle on Oct. 26.....

Bay Area Electric Railroad Association
INCORPORATED

If the globe-glossing Ernest M. Frimbo had done no more than cover the 2,334,000 miles that have made him the champion of rail travel known around the world by readers of *The New Yorker*, he would be by now knight enough. But his is not linear triumph alone: the world's foremost denizen of the dining-cars is equally accomplished as lexicographer, gourmet, jazz fan, sports writer and man-about-Contessas across continents and years. His adventures—here gathered for the first time in book form, and including dozens of accounts never before shared with readers of periodicals—which have for a long time entranced and entrained so many, now make possible the ultimate armchair journey: on the Trans-Siberian railway, across Poland armed with one of four extant timetables, to the Casbah of Tangiers, to the Harlem of Hazel Scott, to the dormitories of the New York Central conductors, to the water towers of Minden, Nevada. All this and more in the company of one of the most unreservedly civilized, urbane, and compulsive travelers-in-class ever to make the best of living in the wrong century.

GROSSMAN PUBLISHERS

ALL ABOARD WITH E. M. FRIMBO, WORLD'S GREATEST RAILROAD BUFF is the November Book Store Manager's Selection of the Month. It is priced at $8.95 and is available from the California Railway Museum Book Store, Star Route 283, Box 150, Suisun City, CA 94585. California residents should add 6% tax. Telephone: weekdays 415-673-6547; weekends 707-374-2978.

Besides operating the California Railway Museum on State Highway 12 midway between Fairfield and Rio Vista, California, the Bay Area Electric Railroad Association sponsors rail tours and excursions to various places of scenic interest in the West.

We are operating an AMTRAK special train from Oakland to Chico and return SUNDAY, APRIL 20, 1975. Mark your calendar. Write us at the above address and we'll place your name on our mailing list at no charge. Drop by our Book Store and do some Christmas browsing.

mixed train of thoughts

WASHINGTON STAR-NEWS, prime Amtrak muckraker, reported on Oct. 25 that Amtrak had spent about $1.5 million on its now-postponed auto ferry service that would have competed with Auto-Train, despite warnings from experts that the project wouldn't work. Amtrak spent a half million dollars on acquiring and modifying auto rack cars that now sit idle, the newspaper article related..... MEANWHILE, AUTO-TRAIN announced Nov. 11 that the company has tested one of its new 3-level auto carriers and found it successful..... NORFOLK TO CINCINNATI passenger trains will get running by next March, Amtrak has announced, and the train will "synchronize" with the JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY to provide thru service to and from Chicago. It will leave Norfolk westbound in early afternoon and arrive Cincinnati around 7am; eastbound it will leave Cincy in late evening and reach Norfolk in mid- to late afternoon.....

* * *

AMTRAK ANNOUNCED THAT ridership in August was up 8% over August 1973. On-time performance was 77.8% systemwide, compared with 76.1% in July. Biggest ridership increase was on the BROADWAY LIMITED, 67%, while the Empire Service gained 54% and the MONTREALER 27%..... A PASSENGER SURVEY made on 7 widely-varied long distance trains July 29-Aug. 4 by Market Facts, Inc., showed that most passengers traveled by coach (74%) with their family (61%) and on vacation (37%). 73% had used the diner, and 76% of them found the food good or excellent, and 77% called the service and waiters good or excellent. 80% used the lounge and most rated the snack quality highly..... THE PANAMA LIMITED has had some problems: on Oct. 31 a freight derailment at Henning, TN blocked the ICG main line, and trains 58-59 were detoured from Memphis over L&N to Milan, TN, and thence the old IC CITY OF MIAMI line to Fulton. Tracks were restored next afternoon. The evening of Nov. 11, 10 minutes after the southbound train had left Chicago's Union Station, a telephone caller told a station official that bombs were planted in the cab, baggage car and two coaches. The train was evacuated and a search made while 5 ICG commuter trains were also held up. A suitcase was taken off for investigation but proved to contain only clothing. Ten passengers elected not to continue their journey aboard the train..... BUSES WERE SUBSTITUTED for SAN DIEGANS 770 & 773 and for the L.A.-Fullerton portion of 772-771's runs on Nov. 1 because of a freight derailment..... THE SOUTHBOUND SHAWNEE had a light and heat failure on Nov. 1, and the northbound train was filled in by a bus.....
THE WILDCAT STRIKE by CN employees in Montreal on Nov. 6 resulted in passengers for Amtrak's MONTREALER being bused from Montreal to St. Albans, VT where they boarded their southbound train..... A NARROW GAUGE steam railroad, the West Side & Cherry Valley Railroad in California's gold rush country is for sale. To buy it, contact Box 443A, Wall St. Journal, 1701 Page Mill Rd., Palo Alto CA 94304..... AMTRAK HAS TOLD the ICC, investigating railroad track maintenance, that the corporation will be charged millions of dollars for deferred maintenance because of improper railroad accounting procedures. It asked for legislation to correct the underlying problem..... RAILROAD RETIREMENT FUND is being overhauled by a bill voted into law over President Ford's veto last month, the first Ford veto to be overridden.....
A VICE CHAIRMAN of Amtrak has been elected: Donald P. Jacobs, professor of finance at Northwestern University. He acts as board chairman in Roger Lewis's absence....
AMTRAK WILL RUN special train direct to the Army-Navy game on Nov. 30. The round trip fare from New York is $16..... THE ONLY RDC-2 now in service on Amtrak's New Haven-Springfield line is refurbished #35, recently arrived. Former ROGER WILLIAMS cab unit #27 has received an Amtrak paint job on its nose, in the E unit style said to be highly reminiscent of the original New Haven color scheme the unit wore.....
CHICAGO'S UNION STATION is to get $1.5 million in improvements by next April, including a 314-seat passenger lounge, and a 34-seat refreshment lounge, Amtrak announced on Nov. 11. A new baggage handling area will also be installed.....
AMTRAK'S TURBOLINER #302 northbd on Nov. 9 broke down near Alton, IL and was towed into Chicago by IC Geep 9512, arriving there 3:37pm..... THE GENERAL MILLS board of Directors met on a special train Minneapolis-Seattle on Oct. 26.....

WHAT ARE THE hidden costs of aviation to the taxpayer? When asked about this at a talk last May (see RTN, 2nd May issue), Transportation Secretary Brinegar replied, "There's a regional subsidy program of 60 some odd million dollars, but the rest of it is pretty self-supporting." Brinegar was speaking of air line travel, but when general aviation subsidies reported by Amtrak board member Edward Ullman in a recent letter to a Seattle newspaper are considered, they reveal that the government subsidizes more than 80% of the costs of all flying! Quote: "For 1974 general aviation contributed 87 million dollars in taxes but the allocated costs were 455 million, a deficit of $368,000,000; for 1975 the deficit is estimated to be $442,000,000 or about $2 for every man, woman and child in the country"..... A TELEVISION PROGRAM not to be missed is the hour-long special, "Johnny Cash Ridin' The Rails: The Great American Train Story," to be aired on ABC Nov. 22 at 10pm (EST). The program re-enacts scenes from 1830 to the present, including Mr. Cash's singing the title song, "Ridin' the Rails" from the dome of the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, traveling across Wyoming..... THE HOUSTON POST reports that Amtrak board member Joseph MacDonald is studying the possibility of passenger trains between Houston and Dallas, in response to many citizen letters from the area..... THE LAS VEGAS CELEBRITY TRAIN has dropped its hi-level cars (consist of Nov. 8: Amtrak engines 515 & 514; cars 7504, 7518, 7507, 8101, 5000, 7500, 7515, 7508, and obs car "Hulham") because of problems in fueling them with UP facilities..... WITH THE AMTRAK bus dropped between Bakersfield and Los Angeles, a Greyhound schedule now must be used which is nearly the same as before northbound but almost an hour later southbound: northbd lv LAUPT 8am, ar Bakersfield 11am; southbd lv Bakersfield Amtrak station 5:40pm, ar LAUPT 8:20pm.....

* * *

A REPORT SAYS that Southern Railway plans to raise coach and first class fares 10% effective Dec. 9..... NOW GENERAL MOTORS, over the Chairman's signature, is publishing educational-looking newspaper ads, two of which have appeared so far: "A message to America's car buyers" and "Some common sense about cars." The "common sense is that "Buying a new car now is a good investment. For you and for our economy. Compared to earlier models, our new cars conserve valuable fuel." The conclusion, "Right now is the time to buy a new car." Quips one RTN contributor, "At $5,000? The appeal here leaves me breathless"..... JACKSON TO DETROIT passenger service is supposed to commence any time now. The state is helping support the new Amtrak run. A two-car locomotive-pulled train will leave Jackson 6:10, reaching Detroit 7:50am. Return is 4:50pm from Detroit with Jackson arrival 6:25pm. The train will run in place of an RDC car now operating between Detroit and Ann Arbor..... SHUTTLE BUS SERVICE, privately operated, between Daytona Beach, FL and the Deland train station is expected to get underway this month. Fare should be about $3.....

* * *

A FRENCH TURBO replaced the ST. CLAIR and WOLVERINE on the Chicago-Detroit route on Oct. 23 as a test run before Amtrak decides whether to put the new trains on the route when its additional Turbo equipment begins arriving next spring. Turbos would make the 279-mile run about an hour faster than conventional equipment..... LEFT AND RIGHT hands department: While Amtrak is announcing the dropping of Passenger Service Representatives and on-board Service Directors, one of its departments is issuing a press release quoting a travel writer with praise for the "bright young ladies serving as Amtrak Passenger Representatives" (who) "have the friendliness and easy manners of...stewardesses"..... AMTRAK'S "HAPPY HOURS" (4-6pm, mixed drinks $1, beer 50¢) on all Florida trains, the COAST STARLIGHT and SOUTHWEST LIMITED, will continue this winter, the corporation announced this month.....
WE NEGLECTED TO credit the photo of the Yakima streetcar on the rear cover of last issue to Glenn Lee..... A QUITE IRREVERENT little publication called "The Pointless Arrow" has just arrived, issue no. 1, November, published by "Concerned Amtrak People," Box 202, San Pablo CA 94806. First issue is devoted to discontinuance of the Bakersfield-Los Angeles Amtrak bus..... AND SPEAKING OF irreverencies, Transportation Secretary Brinegar is the subject of a barbed comic strip in "The National Lampoon," November issue..... EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 27, unreserved coaches have been added to the MONTREALER and LONE STAR.....

HOUSTON

WHAT AMTRAK'S DONE WITH ITS STATIONS

by Alfred E. Ehm

As RTN previously reported, Amtrak consolidated its Houston stations on August 1 by abandoning Santa Fe's Union Station and moving the LONE STAR into SP's Washington Avenue facility. The operation of this Santa Fe train in and out of the SP depot appears to be smooth and efficient. From the standpoint of economy and customer convenience, this long-delayed consolidation of Amtrak's Houston services can only be applauded.

Having an unexpired Ameripass at my disposal, I rode over to Houston on Sept 8 to inspect this new operation. Houston's SP passenger depot, a small, almost tiny structure built after Grand Central Station was torn down, is in no way identified as an Amtrak facility, although a high billboard about 200 yards east of the depot building, rented by Amtrak for some three years now, faces the inbound lanes of the Gulf Freeway and therefore aids at least somewhat in finding the Amtrak station.

As I walked up to the station shortly before 9 a.m., I saw that one of SP's venerable old Alco's was just pulling No. 16 into the station--a standard consist of two SDP40s, a baggage car (newly painted with a white star under the Amtrak name but without a car number), two hi-levels, lounge, diner, a 10/6 sleeper, and Amtrak 3260, the ex-NYC 5-DB/buffet lounge/observation "Wingate Brooks". The train was opened for boarding at about 9:20, and maybe 30 passengers climbed aboard.

Patronage was obviously light this Sunday morning, with only a few more passengers trickling in until the train's departure. One of the trainmen told me that there weren't even 50 passengers aboard this particular train and that patronage would remain poor for the remainder of the year. The train's 9:50 departure was delayed almost 15 minutes, first to stop for a tardy passenger, then because of an extended conference between the train supervisor and the station master.

The eastbound SUNSET, due in at 10:15 a.m., was posted for 10:30 and came in over 20 minutes late. Two new SDPs, coupled head to tail, pulled a baggage car, three hi-levels, diner, lounge, and two sleepers (one of them a Southern Railway car). The only noticeable feature was an "emergency use only" SP car, a smooth-side 8500-series diner. The car appeared to be mechanically sound and was clean enough in appearance. Maybe 100-odd passengers detrained, but no one boarded because the train was annulled as a result of hurricane Carla which had come ashore just west of New Orleans early that morning and had cut SP's mainline. It was not clear whether passengers would be bused to New Orleans on a more northerly route or put up in a hotel. (At 1:30 p.m. Greyhound was still dispatching buses to the bayou city.)

Amtrak's remaining Houston station is a small structure, maybe 60 by 80 feet and about 1/20th the size of the city's Greyhound depot. It is essentially a concrete frame with a flat roof of prestressed concrete beams. Because it was obviously too small for Amtrak's current needs, the railroad enlarged the building in August with a 30 by 30 foot addition towards trackside and extended the concrete beam roof to the platform shed. A large part of the new addition has large glass walls, allowing passengers to view the whole boarding platform. The building's interior is being refinished in Amtrak's known style, except that the comfortable old wooden benches will probably be retained. The station has a long steel platform shed and tracks on both sides, but only the north track is being used at present. The ticket counter was manned by three clerks, and two officials were on duty, including the station master.

From the SP station the LONE STAR now uses the same route as the SUNSET, a restricted (45 min. for 25 miles) secondary SP track into Rosenberg, where the train changes over to Santa Fe rails and a 90mph run into Bellville. The train is reportedly being cleaned and serviced by Amtrak personnel, probably in the SP's Englewood Yard in northeast Houston. It is turned and transferred by the SP.

Houston Union Station, diagonally across the street from the Greyhound depot on Crawford Avenue, was once used by ATSF, CRI&P, FW&D, and MP, but was down to one train when Amtrak commenced operations. All contents were already removed from the waiting room when I visited the station and I do not recall seeing a single sign or other indication that it was once used by an Amtrak train.

Urban-Suburban Transit

AT THE LEFT is the logo of the Southern California Rapid Transit District. There is weeping today among officials of the transit agency, after defeat of the big bond issue on Nov. 5 for building a new rapid rail transit system. The District had advertised its plans widely, and the Los Angeles Times came out in editorial support of the issue. In other areas, such as Long Beach, editorial opposition was expressed, in terms of the cost in taxes (the sales tax would have been raised 1¢), and in disillusionment with the performance of the District, and in particular the recent 66-day bus strike which ended only in mid-October and will mean an increase of about $40 million per year in wage hikes. To add insult to injury, a report in the press on election day indicated that automobile traffic had not varied significantly from normal during the weeks the buses were halted. Once again Southern California has decided to stay with king automobile.

THE BART TRAINS are now carrying more passengers transbay between San Francisco and the Eastbay than AC Transit does. The state estimates that 22% of all transbay commuters are now riding swiftly on BART trains thru the underwater tube. BART has been asked to provide Saturday service for holiday shoppers the four weekends preceding Christmas, and the Board will consider the matter. Bay Bridge traffic has been reduced 5% by the BART transbay operation, and the special carpool lanes of the bridge have 13% less traffic, while commuter book sales are dropping. Greyhound's commuter bus patronage from Contra Costa County transbay has dropped from 5500 to 1500 morning riders.

NEWS HAS LEAKED from the Connecticut Dept. of Transportation that local New London-New Haven train service should begin the first of 1975. Service over this "Clam-digger" route will be two daily round trips, utilizing former New Haven equipment. Another state project will be an upgrading of commuter service from Thompsonville into Hartford, necessitated by an extensive highway rebuilding project on parallel Interstate 91. A questionnaire recently appeared in two Hartford newspapers concerning the resumption of passenger service between Worcester, MA and New London, CT, sparked by a 1400-signature petition received by the Connecticut DOT Commissioner's office.

TRANSIT BRIEFS: CHICAGO'S STATE STREET would become a wide pedestrian mall with only two streetlanes for buses and emergency vehicles, under a plan to be presented to Chicago's city planning commission next month..... SEATTLE'S METRO TRANSIT buses were halted by a strike on Nov. 9, with drivers and mechanics seeking more pay..... A MASS TRANSIT plan for the Chicago metropolitan area, costing about $2.3 billion, is expected to receive approval soon from state and local officials in Illinois and Indiana..... tHE FIFTH ANNUAL international conference on demand-responsive transportation systems (dial-a-bus) was held Nov. 11-13 in Oakland, CA...

THE DOMINATION BY General Motors of bus and locomotive manufacture is being attacked by Senator Edward M. Kennedy, in legislation introduced (S.4131) to break any connection between automobile manufacturers and bus and locomotive building..... A TRANSPORTATION BILL failed in New Jersey at the November elections. In other New Jersey news, the state DOT announced a track improvement program costing $2.7 million for 40 miles of the main line of Central of New Jersey..... INSTALLING SAFETY DEVICES on ICG's Highliner commuter cars is not proceeding rapidly enough, complained the Chicago South Suburban Mass Transit district last month; and it notified the railroad that its 2-year period in which it shouod have replaced the Highliner car destroyed in a 1972 collision is expiring..... THE MILWAUKEE ROAD is applying for a 15% commuter fare increase on its two Chicago commuter lines.....

TRAFFIC JAM IN INTERESTS OF TRANSIT

The annual Transportation Fair in Berkeley, California got underway Nov. 9 with launching of a hot air balloon (right photo). Event, sponsored by Urban Care and other environmentally concerned groups, featured a parade of musicians, bicycles and innovative buses (photo below). Motorists gawked in surprise as the empty buses of varying types blocked traffic in the busy downtown. Among buses were a natural gas-powered vehicle, a GM bus shortened by AC Transit for Richmond (CA) dial-a-bus service recently begun, and a smallish Mercedes-Benz diesel bus (3rd from left in photo) now running as free shuttle between Berkeley BART and Univ. of Calif. campus, and named (in a contest) "HUMPHREY GO-BART."

YAKIMA'S STREETCAR REVIVAL: On recent Sundays following the re-inauguration of streetcar service in Yakima, Wash. (see last issue), the two ex-Portugal single-truckers have been operating on different parts of the system. From Selah, one car runs south from the downtown business area to the Naches River bridge on track paralleling the BN main (EMPIRE BUILDER route) thru Selah Gap. The second car operates from 44th and Nob Hill Ave. to Wide Hollow Junction, where the Wiley City route diverges from the Henrybro line.

SAN FRANCISCO HAS apparently come up at last with a plan acceptable to most all concerned to dismantle the roundly-condemned elevated Embarcadero Freeway, replacing it with a surface parkway connected with I-280, with some transit amenities such as special bus lanes to a redesigned Transbay Terminal. Plan went this month to the city Planning Commission.

PENN CENTRAL

NEW PENN CENTRAL RAILFAN MAGAZINE

Subscription Rate $12.00 Per Year. Make all checks or money orders payable to:

JEROME A. ROSENFELD
133 DULLES DRIVE
DUMONT, N.J. 07628